JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY STUDIES
IN
HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE
HERBERT B. ADAMS, Editor

History is past Politics and Politics present History.—*Freeman*

XII

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AND
FREE SCHOOLS
IN
SOUTH CAROLINA

First Part read before the Historical Society of South Carolina, December 15, 1882.

BY B. JAMES RAMAGE, A. B.

BALTIMORE
PUBLISHED BY THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
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(For Contents of First Series see page 3 of cover. For Subscription-Rates see last page of cover).

XII

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AND

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SOUTH CAROLINA

"Every parish is the image and reflection of the State."—*Thomas Erskine May.*

"The township appears in its ecclesiastical form as the parish or portion of a parish."—*Canon Stubbs.*

"The institutions of any community in the thirteen colonies . . . . are more than a mere object of local interest and curiosity. They show us the institutions of the elder England, neither slavishly carried on nor scornfully cast aside, but reproduced with such changes as changed circumstances called for, and those for the most part changes in the direction of earlier times."—*Freeman.*

"It is the prerogative of self-government that it adapts itself to every circumstance which can arise. Its institutions, if often defective, are always appropriate; for they are the exact representation of the condition of a people, and can be evil only because there are evils in society, exactly as a coat may fit an ill-shaped person. Habits of thought and action fix their stamp on the public code; the faith, the prejudices, the hopes of a people, may be read there; and, as knowledge advances, each erroneous judgment, each perverse enactment, yields to the embodied force of the common will."—*Bancroft.*

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Local Government in South Carolina.

(The Parish, the District, and the County).

The history of the growth of local government in the Southern States presents characteristics which at once distinguish our local unit from that of the Eastern and Western States. In the South the county is the centre of political life. The schools, the roads, the poor, and other local matters are regulated by county officers. In the Eastern States and in many of the States of the Northwest, all such local questions are controlled by the towns* or townships. The political activity of Southern communities is, therefore, less minutely subdivided than elsewhere in the United States; and, as a consequence, there is more centralization in the management of local matters.

This great difference between the local machinery of the two sections of our country is, at first, very strange to the student of American institutions. And when he recalls the fact that the early settlers of Virginia and the Carolinas came from the same land as did the early settlers of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, he is, perhaps, even more impressed with the opposing characteristics of the local institutions of the South and those of the North. The causes of these peculiarities are many. There were the differences between the first settlements of the North and those of the South, and

* The term "town" is liable to mislead those who are only acquainted with the use of the word to express the idea of a larger collection of houses and inhabitants than a village. In the North the term is synonymous with township.

the differences between the settlers themselves. The colonists of the North, notably those of New England, were composed principally of religious refugees, united by the bonds of a common moral idea. Most of the colonists of the South came over simply as Englishmen who wished to better their condition. They were recruited from no particular rank in society. Churchman and dissenter, cavalier and roundhead sat about the same camp fire. Massachusetts was a colony; South Carolina, a province. Compact settlements were necessary on the one hand for the purpose of protection against foreign and domestic enemies; for the purpose of maintaining public worship; and for organizing the government of the infant State. The partial absence of any of these causes left it wholly to the choice of the Southern colonists whether they should found cities or settle in agricultural communities. Their patrons shielded them from the incursions of the red men; although deeply religious, like most genuine Englishmen, they lacked the zeal of fresh converts to a new creed; and their government was in a large measure provided for them. Difference of climate tended to increase the difference produced by these social and moral causes. The rigors of the Northern winters enforced the growth of cities and thickly settled communities. The mild climate of the South favored the cultivation of the soil and the isolation of estates.

There are, however, more points of resemblance between the beginnings of the colonies than are usually supposed. There are similarities of political structure which characterize not only all English settlements of this country, but which reach far back in the past history of our Teutonic race. By a kind of political *atavism*, old institutions re-appear in our history, now clearly and definitely outlined, now only faintly resembling their Germanic prototypes, but everywhere possessing those qualities which distinguish the polity of the Anglo-Saxon race wherever it finds a home.

Nowhere can this divergence from an original identity of political structure be better illustrated than in the develop-

ment of local government in South Carolina. The economic and social peculiarities of this State; its influence on other Southern States; and the successive changes which its constitution has undergone, make it, in many respects, a typical Southern commonwealth. It happens, that, though claimed by the Spaniards, named by the French, and settled by the English, South Carolina is an English colony in the fullest sense of that term; for, from England South Carolina received her people, her customs, her laws, and that ancient religious system which wove itself so thoroughly into her political texture during the early years of her provincial life.

By their charter, the proprietors of South Carolina were vested with great powers and privileges. These noblemen seemed to have cherished the idea that they were founding a mighty empire. The great philosopher, John Locke, who was a personal friend of one of the proprietors, the Earl of Shaftesbury, previously known as Anthony Ashley Cooper, was employed to frame a constitution for the government of the future province. Locke finished his labors in 1669, and presented his "Fundamental Constitutions." The form of government was amended by Shaftesbury. These fundamental constitutions had for their object the better government of the province, and were adopted in order "to avoid erecting a numerous democracy."* The province was erected into a county palatine, like that of Durham. The eldest of the Lord Proprietors was to be Palatine, and, at his death, the eldest of the seven surviving proprietors was to be his successor. The other officers were admirals, chamberlains, chancellors, constables, chief justices, high stewards, and treasurers. The whole province was divided into counties. Each county consisted of eight signiories, eight baronies, and four precincts, each precinct consisting of four colonies. The eight signiories were the share of the eight proprietors, and consisted of twelve thousand acres each. The baronies belonged

* Preamble of the Fundamental Constitutions.

to the nobility of the province, and also consisted of twelve thousand acres each. The nobility of the province were the "landgraves" and "cassiques." There was a landgrave for each county, and twice as many cassiques as landgraves. In every signiory, barony, and manor, its respective lord had power to hold a court leet for the trial of civil and criminal cases. Every manor consisted of not less than three thousand acres. Every lord of a manor enjoyed the same powers, jurisdictions and privileges which appertained to a landgrave or cassique in his baronies. County courts were erected in each county. These courts were composed of a sheriff and four justices, one from each precinct. There were also precinct-courts, each of which consisted of a steward and four justices of the precinct. Every jury consisted of twelve land owners, and a verdict was rendered according to the consent of the majority.*

Such in brief is the substance of this remarkable frame of government. It never went wholly into operation and was abrogated by the proprietors in 1693. It is chiefly interesting as showing the first attempt to provide a system of local government for the province. But time and experience illustrated that this could be successfully provided for only by the people themselves. The early methods of local administration in the province are wrapt in obscurity. The early acts of the provincial parliament† relative to the management of highways, the organization of the militia, the raising of revenues, and the punishment of various offenses against law and morality, are not now to be found. Only their titles have been preserved.

One of these old laws, the title of which is frequently encountered, reads as follows: "At a Parliament held at Charlestowne, at the house of Mr. Anthony Lawson, the

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* Charters and Constitutions of the United States, part 2, pp. 1397–1408.

† The first assembly in the province was for several years known as the Parliament.

eighth day of December, 1691, Annoque Regni Regis et Reginae . . . tertio. An Act for the Better Observance of the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday. Forasmuch as there is nothing more acceptable to Almighty God than the true sincere performance of and obedience to the most divine service and worship, which although at all times, yet chiefly upon the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday, ought soe to be done, but instead thereof many idle, loose, and disorderly people doe wilfully profane the same in tipling, shooteing, gameing, and many other vicious exercises, pastimes and meetings, whereby ignorance prevails and the just judgment of Almighty God may reasonably be expected to fall upon this land if the same by some good orders be not prevented; Be it therefore enacted by the Pallatine and the rest of the Lords and absolute Proprietors of this Province, by and with the consent of the Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that from and after the ratification hereof, all and every person and persons whatsoever shall on every Lord's Day apply themselves to the observation of the same,"* etc. This would seem to argue that the Puritans were not the only colonists who enforced the local observance of the Sabbath and church attendance.

The nearest approach to any system of local government beyond the limits of municipalities is found in the creation of the parishes. The parish was, of course, introduced after the establishment of the Episcopal church. But the establishment of the Episcopal church in the province was only brought about by stealthy innovations and in the face of much opposition. In 1698 a maintenance was settled by law on a minister of the Church of England at Charlestown.† This Act, however, did not encounter serious hostility owing to the popularity of the minister and the small sum voted

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*Statutes at Large of South Carolina, Vol. II, pp. 68 and 69.

†Statutes at Large of South Carolina, Vol. II, p. 135.

him.* A few years later, in 1704, through the influence of the proprietors and civil officers, the Church of England secured a legal establishment, notwithstanding the fact that the Episcopalians had only one church in the entire province while the Dissenters had four. In this year a majority of representatives were sent to parliament who were members of the Church of England.

Soon after the organization of the provincial parliament the new members succeeded in passing a bill which virtually excluded all Dissenters from that assembly. But this oppressive measure was soon afterwards repealed. The Episcopalians, nevertheless, continued to rule the province. Laws were passed for the maintenance of ministers, the erection of churches and chapels, and the division of the counties into parishes.† The parishes were of various sizes and in 1706 their bounds were definitely set by law.

The principal officers of the parish were the rector, the vestrymen, the churchwardens, the overseers of the poor, the sexton, the clerk, the register, and the commissioners of roads. At the head of the spiritual welfare of the parish was the rector. During his ministration he could enjoy the use of the glebe-lands, the buildings of the parish (except one room in the rector's house at Charlestown, which was reserved for a parochial library), all the negroes that belonged to the parish with their increase, and the parish cattle with their increase. He also received a salary from the province varying in amount according to the church. The rector was chosen by the parishioners, but a vacancy was filled by the vestry which proceeded to an immediate election. No rector was allowed to marry parties contrary to the table

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* Ramsay, Vol. II, pp. 2–10. Also for a very excellent history of the church in South Carolina, see Dalcho's Church History.

† Statutes at Large of South Carolina, Vol. II, pp. 282–246. Also Grimké's Collection of the Public Laws of South Carolina, pp. 11–12.

of marriages. He could not hold a seat in either branch of the legislative assembly.*

The duties of the vestrymen were both civil and ecclesiastical and were copied from the duties of the corresponding office in England. In the words of the law describing their qualifications and powers, the vestrymen were elected for the "promotion of the good laws of the Province and the easy despatch of parish business."† They were, moreover, to be "sober and discreet men." Their number, besides the rector, was at first nine and later seven, all residents of the parish. They were chosen yearly by the freeholders and taxpayers of the parish. The election was held on Easter Monday at the parish church. The parish church seems to have been both the civil and religious centre for transacting local affairs. On the doors of the church were posted all important public notices. After his election each vestryman was required to take the oath of office.

The next officer in the parish was the churchwarden. There were two of these in each parish. They assisted the vestrymen in keeping the parish buildings in order. In conjunction with the overseers of the poor, they had a general supervision of the pauper class of the parish. They also managed the parochial elections. The overseers of the poor were yearly nominated by the vestry. Rich people having poor relatives were compelled to assist them. The poor were relieved from various public monies and fines. A person who, in moving from one parish to another, might become a pauper, could be

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* "The ministers of the gospel are by their profession dedicated to the service of God and the care of souls, and ought not to be diverted from the great duties of their function, therefore no minister of the gospel or public preacher of any kind . . . shall be eligible either as governor, lieutenant governor, a member of the senate, house of representatives or privy council in this State."—Constitution of South Carolina of 1778, section XXI. This disqualification no longer exists.

† Statutes at Large of South Carolina, Vol. II, p. 290, sections XXVIII, XXIX, XXX, XXXI, and XXXII.

returned to the parish whence he came.* Poor children were bound out by the churchwardens and the overseers of the poor. A register was kept of the names of persons receiving aid. The churchwardens and overseers of the poor were to account yearly before the vestry for all money spent.† Neglect of duty was punished by a fine.

The sexton, the clerk, and the register of births were appointed by the vestry. They received a small perquisite attached to their office. Parishioners had a right to inspect the records of the parish at any time and to take exceptions to them, if they thought proper. In the parish register were contained all the deaths and christenings of parishioners, except those of negroes, mulattoes, and slaves.

The commissioners of the roads were elected by the freeholders of their respective parishes. In 1719, the parishes were made election districts and each parish sent representatives to the commons' house of Assembly. In some cases two

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* Public Laws of South Carolina, p. 105, Section V.

† A few of the old Records and Registers of the parishes are still in existence. Through the kindness of the Rev. John Johnson of Charleston, the writer was permitted to have access to some of the Records of the old parishes of Prince Frederick's and St. Thomas. Some of these still exist in a remarkable state of preservation, while others are fast going to decay. It is to be hoped that efforts will soon be made to have these important historical materials rescued from destruction. It may not be uninteresting to subjoin one or two extracts from these Records, kindly furnished by the Rev. Mr. Johnson.

"Complaint made that the widow Hughes a poor woman living near the church was a starving she and children/ agreed this day that the Wardens take the Two Bjgest Children and Put them out apprentices in creditable houses and that the Widow go to work to maintain herself and young child as she is very able & a Great deal of spinning offered her."—27 Sep 1777.

"Agreed that Margaret Marten shd. be allowed £10 pounds pr week for her maintenance and cloathing at the expense of John McNight her son."—20 May 1779."

parishes united in sending delegates.* It must not be presumed that the parishes, when first created, were complete political divisions of the province. Far from it. Their importance and status in this regard were acquired years after their erection. Their growth from ecclesiastical to political divisions was, however, gradual and sure. From a territorial division for church purposes, they slowly passed into a political division possessing many of the attributes of a self-governing community.

The early legislators of the colony were deeply impressed with the importance of local education.† So dominant was this idea that it had much to do with the establishment of the Church of England in the province, and the division of the counties into parishes in order to obtain aid from the society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts. This society, which was established in the mother country, only lent its aid to those colonies in which flourished the Episcopal church. The society soon seconded the efforts of the colonial educators, and lent its aid in supplying parish ministers and teachers. Parochial libraries were founded and parish schools were established, at first under the immediate control of the vestrymen.

The history of popular education in South Carolina dates from these beginnings. As far back as 1712, a free school

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*Statutes at Large of South Carolina, Vol. III, pp. 50–55.

By the provision of this act, the parish of St. Philip's, Charlestown, sent five members; Christ Church, two; St. John's, three; St. Andrew's, three; St. George's, two; St. James', Goose Creek, four; the parishes of St. Thomas' and St. Dennis', three; the parish of St. Paul's, four; St. Bartholomew, four; St. Helena, four; and St. James', Santee, with Winyaw, two.

†No view is more erroneous than that which represents the lack of educational facilities in South Carolina during colonial days. Mr. McMaster, in his recent work on the History of the People of the United States, says that in no colony was so little attention paid to education as in South Carolina. It is pleasant to note the letter of Colonel Edward McCrady, Jr., of the South Carolina Historical Society, in the *Nation*, July 5, 1883, disproving Mr. McMaster's statement.

was established in Charleston. Similar institutions were planted at Dorchester, Childsbury, Beaufort, Ninety-Six, St. Thomas' Parish, St. James (Santee) and elsewhere. Many of these schools owe their origin to legacies bequeathed them by generous parishioners, like Beresford, Ludlam, Childs, and others. With the growth of primary education, the demand for the higher education increased, resulting in the establishment of several academies and no less than five colleges before the expiration of the eighteenth century. Many charitable societies also maintained schools, usually for the education of the poor. Constant public encouragement was given to education by donations, immunities, and by vesting, in school boards, escheated property in villages or parishes. In some cases, especially during early times, even slaves were taught to read.* The parishes were confined to that portion of the State which was first settled—the region near the coast—but they gradually increased in number.

In some instances plans for settling new parishes were based on the *hundred*. The method is thus described by Ramsay:† "According to a new plan, adopted in England, for the more speedy population and settlement of the province, the governor had instructions to mark out eleven townships in square plats on the sides of rivers, consisting each of twenty thousand acres; and to divide the land within them into shares of fifty acres for each man, woman, and child that should come to occupy and improve them. Each township was to form a parish, and all the inhabitants were to have an equal right to the river. So soon as the parish should increase to the number of an hundred families they were to have a right to send two members, of their own election, to the assembly, and to enjoy the same privileges as the other parishes, already established. Each settler was to pay four shillings a year for every hun-

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*Carroll's Historical Collections of South Carolina, Vol. II, pp. 538–568.

†History of South Carolina, Vol. I, pp. 108–109.

dred acres of land, except the first ten years, during which term they were to be rent free. Accordingly ten townships were marked out, two on river Altamaha, two on Savannah, two on Santee, one on Pedee, one on Wacamaw, one on Wateree, and one on Black river."

Contemporary with the adoption of the parish system was the creation of the patrol.* It was a sort of police of the parishes. Its objects and functions are best set forth in the preamble to the Act establishing it, passed November 4, 1704. The Act is entitled "An Act to settle a Patrol."† It thus states the object of the patrol: "Whereas on the sight or advice of an enemy it will be necessary for the safety and defence of the inhabitants of this Collony to draw together to the sea coast, or such other place as the Generall shall direct, all the forces thereof; to prevent such insurrections and mischiefs as from the great number of slaves we have reason to suspect may happen when the greater part of the inhabitants are drawn together," etc. In the early days of the province, constant petty expeditions were fitted out by the Spaniards from Saint Augustine against Charleston, and, in retaliation, by Charleston against Saint Augustine. Soldiers were therefore kept constantly employed in defending the coast. The large number of slaves in the province made it extremely dangerous to leave the wives and children of the soldiers unprotected from servile insurrection. The patrol was therefore, in its inception, a homeguard. Its organization, with some modifications, lasted through the lights and shadows of almost two centuries of slavery. The patrol provided themselves with horses, pistols, and guns, and were ready to appear on duty at any alarm. Under the direction

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*According to Skeat, the word patrol is from the old French verb *patrouiller*, to paddle. There is no connection, however, between the word and the peculiar method of corporal punishment which it suggests. The verb is formed from the noun *patte*, the paw or foot of a beast, and hence it came to mean a going of the rounds.

†Statutes at Large of South Carolina, Vol. II, pp. 254-255.

of their captain, they rode from plantation to plantation and arrested all slaves on the road who were found without a pass from their owner. The student of English constitutional history will not be slow to recognize in the patrol the *straet-warden* of the king's highway. Like its old English prototype, the patrol could not maltreat a prisoner, and was, moreover, answerable before the law for good behavior.

From what has previously been said it will be inferred that the parish of South Carolina is of English and not of French origin, as is often stated. The parish of South Carolina and the parish of Louisiana are radically different. The Louisiana parish corresponds to the county in other States. The South Carolina parish was a subdivision of the county, and in character more nearly approached the Northern and Western township. It is true that, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, large numbers of Huguenot refugees came over to the province. A majority of the inhabitants of the parishes of St. Dennis, in the Orange quarter, and St. James, on the Santee, was composed of French settlers. But they did not arrive until the English were firmly established elsewhere in the Carolinas. Besides, the English were too jealous of the French to allow them any influence at all, and for a while excluded them from the legislature. This spirit of intolerance in time passed away. The proprietary government, having become burdensome to the people, was overthrown in 1719, and the people put themselves under the direct control of the King. The parishes continued to extend their organization. Charleston remained the centre of political power. Here was the provost marshal, or sheriff of all the province, and here also, for a long time, was held the only court. But a change was destined to ensue. Already the division between North and South Carolina had taken place.* The colony was soon to become the seat of a struggle between two oppos-

*The division was formally made about 1729, but it had practically existed many years before.

ing systems of local government. One of these systems represented the old Teutonic idea of the township as it was afterwards merged into the parish; the other was the later county system. It is noteworthy that the two systems of local government which have struggled for the mastery in this country, should have so early encountered each other in South Carolina.

The District.

Until near the middle of the last century the inhabited portion of South Carolina was confined to the parishes which fringed the coast. After the overthrow of the proprietary government and under the more immediate management of the Crown, a steady stream of immigration poured in from the old country. The new comers were principally composed of English, French, and Irish, with a few Scotch, all of whom settled in the parishes. At the same time, the northern portion of the colony was rapidly settled by an entirely different class of people, colonists from the present Middle States, from Virginia and North Carolina. The settlements of these sturdy pioneers were confined to the mountain regions and to the fertile valleys of the interior. A wide space of intervening territory separated them from the inhabitants of the parishes. The sections of the colony became, to all practical purposes, two distinct colonies. This was most unfortunate and became the seed of much discontent in after years.* The lower section was rich, strong, and powerful. It possessed some good schools, many intelligent men, and an attempt at local government. In its constitution and character it approached the colonies of New England and Virginia. The upper section more nearly resembled a Western territory of the

* Indeed the local disputes between the "up country" and the "low country" still survive in many instances, though not with the same degree of animosity as in former times.

present time. It was largely composed of rough pioneers, who, dissatisfied with their condition in the older colonies, had removed to this unexplored portion of South Carolina.

Some effort was made as early as 1725 to establish county and precinct courts, but the general court in Charleston soon absorbed all judiciary proceedings.* For many years there was but one sheriff for the whole colony, and he held his office by patent from the Crown. He was subjected to the same penalties as a sheriff in England. At this time all civil and criminal cases were tried in Charleston by the general court. The justices of the peace could have no jurisdiction in any cause which involved more than twenty pounds. A court of chancery, consisting of the governor and a majority of the council, had been established in 1721.† There were also two other courts: a court of the King's bench and common pleas, and a court of vice admiralty. But the general court at Charleston was the most powerful judicial assembly of the colony. All criminal, as well as all civil cases, were tried in this court, a fact which necessarily produced much inconvenience and disorder. To punish a horse-thief or prosecute a debtor one was sometimes compelled to travel a distance of several hundred miles, and be subjected to all of the dangers and delays incident to a wild country. For the purpose of expediting the administration of justice and of summarily punishing criminals, the settlers began to organize themselves into bands and, under the name of "regulators," endeavored to control local affairs. Alarmed at these proceedings, the colonial government manifested some disposition to improve the condition of the colonists of the upper section.

In the preamble to an Act entitled "an Act for establishing Courts, building Gaols and appointing Sheriffs and other officers for the more convenient administration of justice in

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* Brevard's Digest, Vol. I, pp. v–xx. Ramsay, Vol. II, pp. 125–159.
† Statutes at Large, Vol. III, p. 284.

this Province,"* passed in 1768, the Assembly thus organizes the defective system of government for the up-country: "whereas, the establishing courts, building gaols, and appointing sheriffs in different parts of this Province, under proper regulations, will tend to promote the interests of our most glorious Sovereign and his good subjects therein, also to preserve their just rights, liberties and properties and the public peace, inasmuch as the distance from Charleston of many persons who, however remote from thence, are often obliged, either as parties, jurors or witnesses, to attend the courts at present held there for trial of all criminal causes and of all civil actions exceeding the value of twenty pounds current money . . . which hardships deter numbers of people from becoming inhabitants of this Province, etc." The Assembly then proceeded to create new district courts at Beaufort, Georgetown, Cheraws, Camden, Orangeburgh and Ninety-Six. The title of provost marshal was purchased from its holder for the sum of £5,000 sterling, and seven new sheriffs were appointed, one for each new district and one for Charleston.†

The courts held in Charleston were not Circuit Courts. Brevard regards them in the same light as "the Courts of Westminster Hall in England." In the new Circuit Courts the judges could render a decision, in some small cases, without a jury, provided both litigants agreed to this summary method of settling their dispute. The right to a trial by jury, however, was not denied. The creation of the district courts and of the district was the historic origin of local government in the up-country, although the inhabitants of the district did not even possess the right of electing their own sheriff.

Owing to the vast size of the district, the same evils that had been experienced under the old judicial system began to make themselves felt with the increase of population.

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* Statutes of South Carolina, Vol. VII., 197-205.

† Ramsay.

Accordingly, steps were soon taken to improve further the administration of the judiciary by decreasing the size of the districts. It was now that the constitutions of the older colonies began to exert their influence on South Carolina. The General Assembly, at its session in 1783, considered the propriety of dividing the districts "into counties of convenient size, of not more than forty miles square, unless where the number of inhabitants and situation of the lands require some deviation."* Commissioners were appointed for each district, whose duty it was to "fix and ascertain" the boundary lines of each district and county. Two years later, in 1785, the districts were divided into thirty-four counties, as follows: NINETY-SIX into the counties of Abbeville, Edgefield, Newberry, Laurens, Union and Spartanburgh; CAMDEN district into the counties of Clarendon, Richland, Fairfield, Claremont, Lancaster, York, (new acquisition) and Chester;† CHERAWS into Marlborough, Chesterfield and Darlington; GEORGETOWN into Winyaw, Williamsburgh, Kingston and Liberty; CHARLESTON into Charleston, Washington, Marion, Berkeley, Bartholomew and Colleton; BEAUFORT into Hilton, Lincoln, Granville and Shrewsberry; and finally ORANGEBURGH district was divided into Lewisburgh, Orange, Lexington and Winton counties.‡

The county system was introduced through the influence of Henry Pendleton, a settler from Virginia, and was closely modeled after the county system of that colony.‖ Seven Justices of the Peace were elected for each county by the General Assembly, and court was held by them every three months.§ They held their office during good behavior, and filled all vacancies in their number by co-optation. Three

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* Statutes at Large, Vol. IV., p. 561.

† The influence of Pennsylvania is seen in the names of the counties.

‡ Vol. IV., pp. 661–664.

‖ Ramsay.

§ O'Neall's Annals of Newberry District, pp. 12–22.

of the justices constituted a quorum. The county courts never extended to the parishes. The Episcopal Church ceased to be the established church of South Carolina when the British government in America was overthrown by the war for independence. The parish system, however, was still retained by the inhabitants of the low-country. All the political power and patronage were still wielded by the inhabitants of the parishes, and the up-country possessed no influence whatever. By the constitution of 1776, the low-country was allowed twice the number of representatives enjoyed by the up-country, though the latter was perhaps the more populous. This privilege produced much dissatisfaction.

After an experiment of a few years, the county system and the county courts were abolished. The name of "district" was substituted for that of "county," and this form was preserved until after the close of the civil war. With the increase of population and education, the districts gained the privilege of electing some of their own local officers, such as sheriffs and clerks of courts. The general economy of the district differed little from that of the county in other States, with the exception of the absence of a district court. The districts were grouped into judicial circuits, and the circuit judge traveled from one court of his circuit to another.

The manifest injustice in the distribution of the power and representation of the State continued to produce much dissatisfaction in the up-country. By the constitution of 1790 the cause of contention was in a measure adjusted. Each district was allowed one senator and two or three representatives. But even this concession on the part of the low-country was far from being entirely satisfactory to the inhabitants of the districts, for it still left them with a minority representation, though possessing a much larger population. Each parish was allowed to send a senator to the assembly, and Charleston was allowed to send two, one for each of the parishes of Saint Philip and Saint Michael. Each parish also

sent two or more representatives to the assembly.* The parishes steadily opposed any increase of power on the part of the districts. The districts were equally determined to secure a more equitable apportionment of representation and a more equal share in the government. Again and again unsuccessful attempts were made to effect a harmonious settlement of the dispute. The capital was in time moved from Charleston to the new town of Columbia in the interior.† By an amendment to the constitution, in 1808, the house of representatives was made to consist of one hundred and twenty-four members, half of whom represented the white population and half the taxables.‡ The constitution of the senate remained unchanged. The senate was therefore controlled by the low-country and the house of representatives by the up-country. As the governor, the judges, and all other important officers were appointed by the assembly, the provisions of this amendment were readily accepted by both sections of the State. A sort of double government was instituted. Part of the public officers resided in Charleston and part in Columbia. There was a treasurer for the low-country and one also for the up-country, and, with very few modications, this system was preserved until after the close of the civil war. The organization of the district was preserved in the up-country and that of the parish in the low-country.

After the close of the civil war, in obedience to the proclamation of President Johnson and the orders of Provisional Governor Perry, a convention of the people of South Carolina assembled in Columbia September 13, 1865, to re-organize the State government. The ordinance of secession was repealed and a new constitution adopted. Many of the changes in the constitution and improvements in the methods of

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* Constitution of 1790. Article I., sections 3–8.

† The act for laying off the town of Columbia and erecting the new State buildings therein was passed by the assembly March 22, 1786. See Statutes of South Carolina, Vol. IV., pp. 751–752.

‡ Amendment of 1808. Also Calhoun, Vol. I., pp. 402–406.

local government were suggested by Governor Perry in his message to the convention.* "The great political convulsions which have taken place in the Southern States," said he in his message to the convention, "and the terrific war which has swept over South Carolina, devastating her territory and depriving her citizens of all civil government, are too well known to you, and too painful in their detail, for me to bring them unnecessarily in review before you. Instead of dwelling on the past, and grieving over its errors and misfortunes, let us, with manly fortitude, look to the future, and accommodate ourselves to the circumstances which surround us, and which cannot be changed or avoided. The President of the United States has manifested a generous and patriotic solicitude for the restoration of the Southern States to all their civil and political rights, under the Constitution and laws of the United States. He desires to see the Federal Union reconstructed as it was before the secession of those States; and he will oppose the centralization of power in Congress, and the infringement of the constitutional rights of the States, with the same zeal, energy and power with which he resisted the assumed right of secession on the part of the States. In order to accomplish this re-union of the States, the President desires that South Carolina, as well as all the other States in rebellion, should accept as inevitable and unavoidable the great final results of the war."

The parishes were abolished and the district system was extended to the low country. The triumph of the district over the parish was complete when Charleston district, instead of the parishes of Charleston, sent its delegation to the assembly. Boundaries of the judicial and election districts remained unchanged. The semi-duplicate form of State government was abolished and provision was made for only one treasurer with his office at Columbia. Slavery was forever prohibited in the State; the "freedmen," however, were not enfranchised.

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* Message No. I, Journal of the Convention, pp. 11–19.

Governor Perry thus speaks of the aristocratic character of the government of South Carolina: "The general assembly of South Carolina is an electoral college for the State as well as a legislative body. They have the election of Governor, electors of President and Vice-President, Lieutenant Governor, United States Senators, Judges and Chancellors, all State officers, Magistrates, Commissioners of Roads and Bridges, Poor and Free Schools, Commissioners and Masters in equity, and various other officers. This embarrasses legislation, occupies a great deal of the time of members, and is productive of evil consequences. The most of these elections and appointments should be taken from the legislature." *

Acting upon this wise suggestion, the power of the legislature was greatly diminished. Many of the officers who had formerly been appointed by the legislature were made elective. Local government was also greatly increased. The period embraced by the operation of this constitution is, however, so short and so full of the anarchy and disorders engendered by the great civil conflict as to be almost devoid of any local government.

The County.

The county system is the present system of local government for the whole State of South Carolina. By the constitution of 1868, commonly known as the reconstruction constitution, the district was abolished and the county erected in its stead.† Various amendments have been made to the con-

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*Journal of Convention of 1865, page 15.

†This constitution was framed by a convention (called under the reconstruction acts of Congress by Major-General Canby). It assembled at Charleston, January 14, 1868, and completed its labor March 17, 1868. The constitution was submitted to the people April 14 and 16, 1868, and was ratified by 70,000 against 27,288 votes. It may further be added that the "freedmen," who voted at the election, were unanimously in favor of the constitution. See Charters and Constitutions, Part II., p. 1646.

stitution since that time, especially since the overthrow of the reconstruction government, but the main features of the county system remain the same now as when first adopted. Without commenting on the particulars of these changes, it may be best to give some account of the operations of the county system in the State; to enumerate the officers and their respective duties, and briefly to describe the other characteristics of local government as it exists in South Carolina at the present day.

The entire State is divided into thirty-four counties, which are bodies politic and corporate, and can sue and be sued.* They also possess many other rights which are usually enjoyed by corporate bodies. Each county, with the exception of Charleston, sends one senator to the State Senate. In Charleston there still remains a faint survival — more traditional than real — of the old parish system. That county is, therefore, entitled to two senators, one for each of the old parishes of St. Philip's and St. Michael's. The present house of representatives consists of one hundred and twenty-four members, who are apportioned among the several counties according to the population in each. Some counties send to the house of representatives two, others five, and Charleston as many as eighteen members. Both senators and representatives are elected by the qualified voters of the county, and each receives a salary of five dollars per diem during a session of the assembly. They are also entitled to mileage at the rate of ten cents a mile for the distance travelled in going to and from the meetings of the assembly. A senator serves for four years and a representative two years. The following officers are also elected by the people: a sheriff, a clerk of the Court of Common Pleas and General Sessions, a judge of probate, a school commissioner, three county commissioners and a coroner.

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* General Statutes of South Carolina, 1882, pp. 182–326.

Except the municipalities, there is no political division of the State beyond the county. The township exists barely in name. There is no assembly of the inhabitants of the county for the discussion of local business. The county commissioners have jurisdiction over all roads, ferries and bridges. These commissioners also control all matters relating to taxes, disbursements of money for county purposes, and all other business pertaining to the internal improvement and local concerns of the county. Each township constitutes a highway district, the superintendent of which is appointed by the county commissioners. Each highway district is expected by law to be divided into sections of from two to five miles, and in each section an overseer of roads is required to be appointed by the superintendent of highways. All able bodied men between the ages of sixteen and fifty years are liable to road duty. They must work on the roads not more than twelve nor less than three days yearly, or instead pay one dollar a day for each day required. In every county there is provided a poor house, with a farm, for the accommodation of the pauper class. The county commissioners are the overseers of the poor, and provide employment and comfort for the inmates of the poor house. The commissioners bind out poor children, and may also send all pauper lunatics, idiots, and epileptics to the State lunatic asylum.

The school commissioner has a general oversight of the free schools in his county. The city of Charleston constitutes an exception, having her own superintendent of schools. The school commissioner and two other persons appointed by the State board of examiners constitute a county board of examination, and examine all applicants for teachers' positions. In each school-district three men are appointed by the county board of examiners, who constitute the trustees of the district. An annual tax of two mills is levied by the county commissioners for the support of free schools. The money raised by the tax is distributed among the school districts in proportion to the number of pupils attending the free schools.

The county in South Carolina differs from the county in many other States from the fact that it possesses no judicial organization of its own. We have already seen that two unsuccessful attempts were made to introduce the county courts into the State in early times. But the system failed from various causes. The counties, like their institutional predecessor, the district, are grouped into judicial circuits, and a judge is elected by the legislature for each circuit. In each circuit there is also a solicitor, who is elected by the qualified voters of the circuit. The governor, with the advice of the senate, appoints a number of trial justices for each county. Their number depends entirely upon the demands of the county. The justices hold their office for two years and have jurisdiction over offenses in which fine or forfeiture is under one hundred dollars and imprisonment is less than thirty days. Trial justices appoint their own constables.

The jurisdiction of the court of the probate judge is very limited in character. It only extends to those matters testamentary and administrative which cannot be conveniently decided in the other courts. It also has jurisdiction over all business pertaining to minors and the allotment of dower, and in cases of larceny. The following county officers are appointed by the governor: the auditor, the treasurer and the master in equity. The present system of local government is far from being a satisfactory one to the inhabitants of the State. Many of the counties are very large, which makes it exceedingly inconvenient to those who live at a great distance from the county seat. The results are bad roads, worse bridges, and an imperfect system of free schools — a system which lacks the stimulating support of local taxation.

There is a growing demand for an improved system of local administration. This desire manifests itself in various ways, although a constitutional amendment looking towards the reduction of the size of the counties was lately defeated. A step in the right direction was taken by Governor Thompson, in his inaugural address, where he strongly advo-

cates local taxation for the support of the free school system.* A bill looking to that end was rejected in the senate in 1882. No better comment upon the rejection of this measure can be made than that already expressed by the Charleston *News and Courier:* "It was a mistake, we think, to reject the senate bill permitting the levying of local taxes for educational purposes to supplement the proceeds of the State tax. The general tax cannot be increased. It is as high as the people can bear, but each locality, knowing its own needs and its own ability, should be free to raise an additional fund under authority of law if it desired to do so." †

The future development of local government in the State will be in the direction of local support of the free schools. Local control will follow close upon local support. In other words, the school house will be for the new South Carolina what the church was for old South Carolina and for New England, namely, the parent of local self-government. When once the advantages of local support for schools are seen in the greatly improved condition of southern education, the system will extend to the local control of the poor, the roads, the bridges, and all other common affairs now under the control of the townships throughout the West.

Such is the outlook for local government in South Carolina. Historically, the parish, the district and the county are inseparably connected. They approach, meet, and overlap each other in the two centuries of South Carolina history. Everywhere they identify themselves with those principles of self-government, the continuation of which has made the English race what it is in the Old World and in the New.

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* Those who have read Governor Thompson's reports on free schools while he was Superintendent of Education, will know that this idea of local taxation for free schools is strongly urged.

† Charleston *News and Courier*, December, 1882.

Free Schools in South Carolina.*

It is often urged as a matter of reproach that the more Southern colonies of our Union failed to establish common schools, while their sister colonies were earnestly striving to provide for the general enlightenment of the population; that the Southern States continually discouraged school-establishment, and that, on the whole, the Southern people are opposed to the entire system of common school education. Now this is a grave charge. If it can be supported by sufficient evidence, one might almost call it a crime on the part of the Southern people. Indeed, it would be something extraordinary and almost paradoxical, if, in an English colony and among English parishes, men could be found opposing the education of their fellows of the same race and blood. It would be something anomalous in the annals of the English people. A recently deceased Baltimore newspaper once published the astounding fact that "no such thing as free schools were known in the South before the late war, and that the oldest of them have only been in existence for a few years!"

As a matter of fact, schools for the education of the people were among the earliest institutional germs in the Southern States. To discover these germs, we have only to look into the early legislation of South Carolina. This particular State

* *Authorities.*—Statutes at Large of South Carolina. Acts of the General Assembly. Ramsay's History of South Carolina. Simm's History of South Carolina. Dalcho, Episcopal Church in South Carolina. Reports of the Superintendent of Education. Mayor Courtnay, Education in South Carolina. Carroll's Collections.

is taken as an example, not because common schools have no history in other Southern States, or because the State of South Carolina has done any more in this direction than any of her neighbors. Perhaps other States have furnished as good a record, and some may have done even more for popular education. But inasmuch as the old institutions and customs of the mother country were so perfectly reproduced in South Carolina; and, further, because from South Carolina so many other Southern communities have gone forth; and, lastly, because her public policy and history have so often been the public policy and history of the whole South,—a sketch of free-school legislation in South Carolina may serve as a typical sketch of the beginnings of Southern education.

Of course, certain peculiar circumstances and local conditions must be taken into account in such a study as is proposed. The effect of climate upon the habits, customs and industries of communities should be remembered. The state of society must be examined. And especially should be noted the nature of the chief occupation of the inhabitants. Indeed, these things must be investigated in the study of any social question, and it is highly necessary in considering the question of free schools.

The climatic influences on the early settlers of South Carolina are at once seen by the tendency of the people to engage in rural pursuits. From the earliest times, the principal occupation of the people was agriculture. Experience has abundantly shown that the exclusive pursuit of this industry is unfavorable to the general diffusion of knowledge. *Pagan* and *heathen* still suggest by their etymology the characteristic ignorance of the rural population in classic Italy and in mediæval Europe. Even in our own time and generation, we look to the great centres of population and of wealth for the higher development of systems of education. In such communities the people are collected together and their children can be conveniently educated. Moreover, there is the additional advantage, in such communities, of obtaining that superior train-

ing which only the friction of ideas can give. Until very recently, little attention has been devoted in South Carolina to manufacturing interests. In almost all Southern communities, manufactures, as such, from the very nature of English colonization in that section, were almost totally neglected, and it may be seriously questioned whether they will ever be extensive in the South. From the pursuit of agriculture to the almost total exclusion of any other occupation, the growth of municipalities was slow. One should not expect, therefore, to find that the development of the common school system in South Carolina was as rapid as in other colonies where the industries of the people were more varied. It goes without saying that it would be absurd to compare the growth of free schools in the manufacturing communities of New England with the free schools of the agricultural communities of the South, and thereupon urge that the one section upheld the system, while the other opposed it. Rather let the comparison be made, if made at all, between the free school system of the South at one period of history, and the free school system of the South at another period.

As to the social aspect of our study, it may be said that slavery existed in South Carolina from very early times. This fact prevented the growth of a strong middle class out of whose ranks the patrons of common schools are so strongly recruited. The common people which was generated in South Carolina was that hybrid of slavery and freedom, known in provincial language as the "poor white trash." This class was perfectly contented so long as it maintained a questionable superiority over the negro, and so long as nature afforded it a means of subsistence without toil, without money, and without price. The semi-tropical climate of the South afforded ample means for satisfying human wants by hunting and fishing. Poaching prevailed on the remote lands of the planters, and thus the "poor white trash" eked out an existence as precarious as that of the Indian, and cared as little as the savage for education and restraint. Little

could be done, therefore, in this direction by common schools. Of course, little effort was made to educate the slaves, though, as we shall presently see, the attempt was successfully made in the early days of the colony.

But if the agricultural pursuits and social condition of South Carolina had such an influence upon its educational economy, the very nature of the agricultural pursuits contributed largely to render the school system different from other systems. It is easy to conceive of the evolution of an almost perfect system of free schools in those communities where only a small farm is amply sufficient to support an entire family. In such communities of small farms, with dwellings in sight of each other, the children can conveniently and safely attend school. The case was entirely different in South Carolina. From the very first settlement of the colony, there was a constant tendency on the part of the settlers to occupy large plantations. After the introduction of great staples, such as cotton and rice, this tendency increased.

The growth of towns, with all their good effects upon free schools, was a small factor in the educational history of South Carolina. Indeed, there was scarcely any town worthy of the name outside of Charleston. All life was spent on the plantations, and education was carried on to a great degree by the employment of tutors. Having thus described the early social and industrial condition of the State, we are better prepared to investigate the origin and growth of the free school system in South Carolina.

The history of free school legislation in South Carolina naturally divides itself into four periods, embracing nearly two centuries. Each period, while greatly differing from the others in length and characteristics, is closely connected with all the rest. (1). The first is the colonial period, and represents the first efforts of the early settlers to provide for the education of the masses. (2). The second period extends from 1811, when the benefits of free schools were extended to the districts, and a more general system was established, to the

close of the civil war in 1865. (3). The third period covers that dark chapter in the history of the State commonly called the reconstruction period. (4). To the fourth and last division belongs the growth of the free school system in the State since the downfall of the carpet-baggers' *régime*, in 1876. As it is our purpose to consider more especially the germs of free schools in South Carolina, more attention will be paid to the first of these periods than to any other.

It was but natural that in Charleston free schools should first take root and flourish. It was at first the only town in the colony. It was here that the poorer classes were found in larger numbers than in the rural localities. About the beginning of the last century a society was formed in London for the purpose of propagating the gospel in foreign parts. It lent its support principally to those colonies where the Episcopal church was the established order. From the fact that the Church of England was the established church of South Carolina, it received liberal aid from this charitable society. It is interesting to observe, in contemporary writings, the interest which the early parishes manifested in local education, and also the encouragement which they gave to it.

In 1705, the Reverend Samuel Thomas, a missionary of the above society, speaks of Goose creek parish in South Carolina: "The number of heathen slaves in this parish I suppose to be about 200; twenty of which I observe to come constantly to church, and these and several others of them well understanding the English tongue and can read." Of another parish he remarks: "I have here presumed to give an account of one thousand slaves belonging to our English in Carolina, so far as they know of it, and are desirous of Christian knowledge, and seem willing to prepare themselves for it, in learning to read, for which they redeem time from their labour. Many of them *can* read in the Bible distinctly, and great numbers of them were learning when I left the Province." Further, in the same memorial, Mr. Thomas says, "South Carolina is but an infant colony, and their treasury at best but small, out

of which they have, at present, appropriated 2,000 pounds to the service of the church, for the building six churches and as many parsonage houses, and buying glebe land; so that for every particular parish the publick disburse three hundred and thirty-three pounds, and £50 annually for all the six parishes; which, considering their present circumstances, is very extraordinary, and perhaps such instances of zeal can hardly be paralleled in these parts of the world."

The seeds of free schools planted by the charitable society of London, and nurtured by the people of the colony were not slow in maturing. In 1712, a free school was established in Charleston, through private donations, and the legislature was its especial guardian. It appears that it was the object of this school, not only to furnish its pupils with a classical education, but to teach writing, arithmetic and merchant accounts. In order to encourage private donations, it was enacted that any person giving £20 could nominate a scholar to be taught free for five years. The master, in addition to enjoying the use of the lands, houses, and other property of the school, received a salary of £100 per annum. He was required to teach, without charge, twelve scholars, who were appointed by the commissioners of the school. The same act went further in establishing schools. It fixed a donation of £10 annually on each parish schoolmaster, and empowered the vestry of each parish to draw upon the public receiver for £12 in order to defray the expenses of building the parish school.

The first royal governor, after the revolution from proprietary misrule, was an earnest advocate of popular education, and did much to foster the growth of free schools. Many parishioners caught the growing enthusiasm and made donations for the encouragement of education. Especial mention should be made of the gift made by the Reverend Mr. Ludlam, of Goose Creek. He left his entire estate, valued at £2,000, for the foundation of a free school.

About the beginning of the last century a colony of Congregationalists, from Dorchester, Massachusetts, under the

guidance and direction of the Reverend Joseph Lord, settled in South Carolina at a place to which they gave the name of their old home in New England. With other institutions, these excellent puritans brought with them their system of free schools. An act was soon passed by the colonial legislature for founding and erecting a free school at Dorchester, in St. George's parish. The free school idea of the town of Dorchester, Massachusetts, was thus transplanted to the free school of Dorchester town, South Carolina, where town and parish were reunited.

In 1735, Richard Beresford bequeathed a large sum of money towards erecting a free school in St. Thomas' parish. Shortly afterwards, free schools were erected at Ninety-Six, Beaufort, and in St. Thomas' parish. Many other societies were chartered, having for their object the erection of free schools. Colleges were founded at Charleston, Beaufort, Cambridge, and Pinckneysville. In many instances the State vested all the escheated property of a parish or a village in the trustees of schools and academies.

It is not maintained that the State, as yet, had established any extensive system of free schools, yet it is clear that great encouragement was given to all educational efforts. The matter of regulating the schools, however, was left to the parishioners themselves. This is seen in the case of St. Thomas' parish, where at Childsbury, James Childs bequeathed £600 towards erecting a free school, and the parishioners, by local subscription, increased the amount to £2,800. These parish free schools continued to flourish by local support, and their influence was potent for the intellectual good of South Carolina.

We now come to the second period in the history of free schools in this State. This period began in 1811, when the State assumed control of the schools, and extended until 1865. The act which established this system was entitled "an Act to establish Free schools throughout the State," and provides that "there shall be established in each election district

within this State, a number of free schools equal to the number of members which such district is entitled to send to the house of representatives in the legislature of this State. In each of these schools the primary elements of learning, reading, writing and arithmetic, should always be taught, and such other branches of education as the commissioners, to be hereinafter appointed, may from time to time direct."

Every citizen of the State was allowed to send his children or wards to the free school in his district free of charge. Where more children applied for admission to a school than the same could conveniently accommodate, preference was always given to the poor children. Three hundred dollars per annum was the amount appropriated for the support of each school. The schools were controlled by commissioners appointed by the legislature. The commissioners had a general oversight of the schools in their district, determining their situation, appointing the teachers, deciding on the admission of the scholars, and drawing on the comptroller for the school money. The act recognizes the existence of other free schools at that time in the following manner: "In all districts where a school or schools are already, or may hereafter be established by private funds or individual subscription, it shall be lawful for the commissioners of the free schools, at their discretion, to unite such part or parts of the fund provided by this act for such district with such school or schools, in such manner as may appear to them best calculated to promote the objects of this act."

Free schools were thus legally established throughout the State. But in point of fact they did not exist long before an effort was made by the members of the legislature from the sparsely settled districts to abolish the whole system. This was in 1813, two years after their general adoption. The objection was that they were too inconvenient and too expensive. This argument called forth an eloquent plea for free schools by a representative from Charleston. The speech is quoted at length in Mayor Courtenay's little monograph,

entitled "Education in South Carolina." A few words will, however, illustrate the spirit of the address. Speaking of the objection to the whole free school system on account of the scattered population in one or two districts, Mr. Crofts, the representative from Charleston, thus appealed to his opponent: "Let him look back and rejoice that this institution so flourishes in the bud. Let him look forward, and anticipating the fruit which it will bear, and the bounties which it will dispense, let him recoil from the meditated blow, and throw away the axe with which he assails its roots. What will be his feelings when it is prostrate, leafless and desolate? It is urged that owing to the sparse population of one or two districts the free schools there are comparatively useless, and therefore the whole system ought to be abolished. This evil time will, of itself, remove; and what kind of influence is that which would abolish a general good in order to get rid of a partial evil? There is a cloud, Mr. Speaker, which the sun cannot penetrate — why does he shine at all? There are rocks impenetrable to the dews of heaven — why are not showers withheld altogether? There are barren places that produce nothing — why is not agriculture abandoned? No, sir, let us rejoice in the good we have done, and regret not that we cannot do everything at once."

Free schools were not abolished in South Carolina. They continued to receive the support of the State, and were managed on the same plan as when first established, only increasing in number.

In 1828, seventeen years after their general establishment, there were eight hundred and forty schools in the State and nine thousand and thirty-six pupils. Twelve years later, in 1840, there were five hundred and sixty-six free schools, with twelve thousand five hundred and twenty pupils. In 1850 there were seven hundred and twenty-four free schools in the State with seventeen thousand eight hundred and thirty-eight children attending them. The support of these schools for the same year was two hundred thousand and six hundred

dollars. At the outbreak of the civil war, in 1861, free schools had grown so rapidly that twenty thousand children attended them, and they had an annual support of more than two hundred thousand dollars.

When the men who had been engaged in the great war of secession returned to their homes in South Carolina, poverty stared them in the face. The homes of many had been destroyed by the ravages of war. The freedom of the blacks had also been proclaimed. Before their emancipation the negroes represented the wealth of the State. After the emancipation of the negroes, the embarrassing question arose how it was possible to educate three times the number of children on one-third of the money. The reconstruction undertook to answer this question. Many earnest and zealous teachers came from the North to engage in the great work. But with them came political demagogues and over-zealous reformers. They exercised little judgment. Instead of trying to secure the co-operation of the native teachers, they ignored them. The social sentiments of the people were utterly disregarded. Instead, therefore, of securing the sympathy, good-will, and encouragement of the white population, these intruders incurred righteous indignation. The corrupt administration of the "carpet-bagger" and of the negro seriously interfered with the free schools. The whole system had well nigh collapsed when the radical ring was overthrown in 1876.

As an illustration of the reckless expenditure of the school money by negro officials during the carpet-bag *régime*, the following example will suffice. The amount of the past school indebtedness of Barnwell county, taken from the report of the Superintendent of Education of South Carolina was:

From November 1, 1872, to November 7, 1876.	$3,648.13
From November 1, 1876, to November 1, 1878.....	890.88
	$4,539.01

When the people of South Carolina resumed control of their local affairs in 1876-77, the outlook of the free schools

was perhaps even gloomier than at the close of the war. At that time the State was a battle-field covered, as it were, with blasted homes, smoking ruins, with the dead and wounded. But in 1877 that battle-field presented the appearance of having suffered pillage at the hands of camp followers. Much of the school fund had been squandered; the teachers were badly paid; the pupils poorly taught; the school buildings in many places were badly out of repair. More than this, a school debt of more than $200,000 was left for the white population to pay. But the people did not despair. Earnest and energetic souls inspired them, and, with the determination characteristic of their race, the people of South Carolina slowly began the great work that lay before them. The schools were organized on a more equitable basis; the teachers were selected with more care; attention was paid to the pupils. Provision was made for the liquidation of the enormous school debt of 1877. The legislature provided that the poll tax of most of the counties should be used to extinguish the debt. Free school resources were subjected to a very severe strain, but the teachers were convinced of the honesty of the administration, and confidence was soon restored.

During the year 1880-1 there were 3,057 public schools in the State of South Carolina, an increase of 84 over the preceding year. The school population, white and colored, was 133,458 out of a total population of 995,577. The total number of teachers was 3,249, the average wages being $25.45 per month for males, and $24.48 for females. The entire amount of salaries paid to teachers during the year was $309,855.10, and the total available school fund was $415,108,943. These facts present a most hopeful picture for the free schools of South Carolina. This cheering outlook is largely due to the heroic efforts of the last Superintendent of Education of the State, Col. Hugh S. Thompson, now Governor of the State, who held the above educational position from the time of the overthrow of the carpet-bag government. With indefatigable zeal he revived the free

school system and gave it an impetus which, if sustained by the co-operation of the people, will be of lasting good to the State.

One of Colonel Thompson's special schemes was the organization of two Normal schools, one for white and one for colored teachers. These schools, which meet every summer, are largely attended, being free of charge. They are conducted by the best teachers and lecturers in the South and West. The expenses incurred are defrayed by the State. The good done by these Normal schools cannot be over-estimated. While quickening the teachers, they also influence the pupils and interest the whole public in the great cause in which they are engaged. In the words of the official report on these institutions: "The importance of the work will, perhaps, be better understood by all when it is known that the students of the Institute, taking the actual number as stated by them, had charge of the education of an aggregate of about 15,000 children, or, of nearly one-fourth of the white children of the State who are attending school. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that normal institutes are maintained for the benefit of the children of the State, not for the personal benefit of the teachers who attend them."

The growth of municipalities will have a powerful influence upon the growth of the free schools, and free schools will react upon the municipalities and quicken local life. A demand for the right of *local* taxation for the support of schools is already growing in South Carolina. This, however, is but a return to old colonial principles. When everywhere adopted, local taxation will be found to be of great practical benefit, not only in increasing the influence and efficiency of the free schools, but also in demonstrating to the people the great advantage of controlling all their local affairs. Cheering signs for the future of free schools in South Carolina must be welcomed, not only by the citizens of the State, but by good citizens everywhere, and by all who prefer enlightenment to ignorance, morality to vice, happiness to misery, and who honor an intelligent, upright, law-abiding people.

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